



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH  
BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20014

December 9, 1976  
In reply refer to:  
CA 16896-19

2/9  
d. Lederberg  
Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
Professor and Chairman  
Department of Genetics  
Stanford University School  
of Medicine  
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

The Microbial Chemistry Study Section at its recent November 1976 meeting decided on a DEFERRAL action for your above referenced renewal grant application in order to secure additional information. The Study Section found difficulty in formulating a more definitive recommendation because of the manner in which the material within the body of your application was presented. Your specific aims have broadly stated in essence that your objectives are to study bacterial transformation. The research plan and protocols which you have presented to attain your objective(s) are similar, if I may use the analogy, to the outlines brushed in by an artist of international reputation. Unfortunately, the Study Section cannot view such a presentation and in good faith fulfill its responsibility of public accountability for its judgments. What we need now are the finer brushstrokes that will paint in the details you have in mind so that others may find themselves better able to evaluate the finalized picture.

Though the objective of studying transformation may be worthy, your overall proposal does not suggest specific models, does not suggest specific mechanisms for investigation, and does not describe specific experiments that might generate specific models for recombination. The other components of your proposal raise questions of a similar nature; exactly what and how are things to be pursued? I might add that the Study Section is not interested in receiving additional information that may be pertinent to your computer project(s); we are specifically interested in receiving information on biological experimentation.

The Study Section will hold its next meeting on March 17-19, 1977, and its recommendations for that meeting will be reviewed by the May 1977 National Cancer Advisory Board meeting.

Dr. Lederberg

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It would be most helpful, in view of the mentioned meeting dates, if any additional information you may submit were to reach my office by February 1, 1977. Should you wish to contact me, I can be reached by calling (301) 496-7130. Material should be forwarded directly to my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gustave Silber". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial 'G'.

Gustave Silber, Ph.D.  
Executive Secretary  
Microbial Chemistry Study Section  
Division of Research Grants